

## Tapping

When I was about 7-8 years old I lived with my grandparents in South Carolina. They had this big house that used to be a stop on the Underground Railroad and I used to love discovering all the cool passageways that ran all over the place. When I wasn't doing that, my grandfather took me fishing and hunting while my grandmother would teach me how to sew and cook. Kind of girly things for a little boy to be doing, but those skills definitely helped out in the long run.

My folks were military, so rather than drag me around and traumatize me with multiple moves they had me stay at my grandparents'. My room sat at essentially the middle of the house. It was surrounded on all sides by thick walls which used to house passageways but had since been sealed off. I hung up pictures and cool things befitting an eight year old's room. I loved the house, but it started to feel a little off after a while.

I noticed that my things kept disappearing. Nothing incredibly valuable, just trivial things like my toothbrushes and combs. No, they never reappeared at some random place, and I would never see them again. My grandparents spent a fortune on my various grooming products, I imagine. It was just my stuff though, which left me and my family in confusion. They used to joke that a ghost must have taken a liking to me.

They were kidding of course, but I started to get really freaked out over this notion. I started paying attention to very minor noises and details, and whenever something odd DID present itself it would creep me out to the extreme. I remember drying a favorite shirt of mine, only to come back five minutes later to find the dryer door open and my shirt gone. My things would be moved. Pictures of me that were on the walls would go missing. Most importantly, these little holes started appearing in the walls around the house.

They first showed up in my room, then they just popped up all over the house. The kitchen, the bathrooms, the living room. Everywhere except the master bedroom, where my grandparents slept. This really creeped me out, so one night I decided I was going to sleep in their room. I slept in a pretty comfy sleeping bag on the floor, and for the first time in awhile I felt pretty safe.

Two AM rolls around and I wake up to this weird tapping sound. It's almost as if someone was hammering something a little ways off. It was the middle of the country and people are often awake doing random things at all hours, so I started to write it off. The moment I started to shrug it off, I happened to look at the far wall, directly facing me. Just in time to see a jagged piece of wall fall out, leaving another tiny hole. I yelled and woke my grandparents. They were genuinely upset for me, so we packed up a few things and left for a weekend.

When we got back, the first thing I noticed is that almost everything in the house that had anything to do with me was either gone or damaged. My room was now host to at least thirty different holes, all in varying shapes and sizes. I was exhausted and all I wanted to do was go to bed. Me and my grandparents stood in my room and demanded whatever was in the house to leave me alone.

There was no great relief, there was no angry outburst, there was no ghostly laughter. Just silence and me feeling scared and a little silly. I decided to be brave and stay in my room that night.

I awoke around 12 AM to a thump, the kind I usually attribute to my family moving around knocking into a wall. I started drifting back off, only to hear another thump. Then another.

Eventually these grew pretty rhythmic. I was scared out of my mind. I bolted upright and started scanning around my room. I grabbed the flashlight that I had grown to keep on my nightstand and started shining it everywhere. The floor, the walls, the holes.

The thumping stopped, but I kept looking around frantically. Eventually my beam caught something shiny and I fixated on it. As soon as I realized what it was, I screamed and started crying like a little girl for my parents. It was a human eye.

My grandparents came in and saw this, an unblinking human eye staring out at the room. The police were called and came immediately. They opened the sealed portions of the house and searched every passageway they could find. Eventually they came to the section behind my far wall, where the eye was located. I wasn't privy to the information when I was that young, but when I got older my grandparents told me what it was.

The police came upon this tiny room, only big enough to hold one person comfortably if only barely. They were first greeted by what they described as a thick layer of garbage and waste. Most of this "garbage" was my things that had gone missing. My combs, my toothbrushes, my socks, my shoes, my washcloths. My favorite shirt. At the wall, surrounded by pictures of me, was a man. He was completely naked, the only thing keeping him upright was a belt around his neck looped over a nearby low rafter. The cause of death was autoerotic asphyxiation. He had died staring at me, pleasuring himself, surrounded by his sick fascination with me.

I don't think there's any getting over it. I can't stand the dark now, and now when I go to sleep...all I can think about are holes.